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LETTER DATED 28 NOVEMBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you of an incident that took place on 23 November 1996. At 0530 hours the Iraqi fishing vessel Shatt al-Arab was fishing five nautical miles south of Mina' al-Bakr when the United States frigate bearing hull number 33 demanded that the master should allow his vessel to be searched. At 0730 hours a number of men from the frigate boarded the Iraqi vessel, and they left at 0850 hours after completing their search.

I request your intervention with the United States of America with a view to halting and preventing any repetition of acts of aggression and provocation by United States warships against Iraqi civilian vessels, given that such acts are in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of public international law.

I also affirm the legally established right of the Republic of Iraq to seek compensation for the damage caused to its property by this act of aggression, in accordance with the principle of international responsibility.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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